Van Vleet house burns

CHARRED WALLS AND FRAME are all that remain of the Van Vleet house at Parker's Landing, Washougal, following a fire just before 11 p.m. Friday While arson is suspected, the state fire marshall's investigators will continue to probe the cause of the fire.

Thirteen firefighters and two engines headed for the fire at 10:48 p.m. Friday, according to a Washougal Fire Department spokesman.

The house, now owned by the Port of Camas-Washougal, had been slated for razing when a number of local persons urged its preservation for possible use as a museum. The property itself is on the National Register of Historic Places, based on Indian artifacts reportedly found on the site.

The Van Vleet house is believed to have been built in 1878, in Fern Prairie and later moved to the river site.

Even though the house is destroyed, there are several groups in the community proposing the site be used as some sort of park or tourist attraction, rather than allowing the port to convert it into a marina parking facility. — POST photo